

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING**

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

<b>PROJECT IDENTIFICATION:</b>	Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program.
<b>REQUESTS:</b>	Signify intent to adopt the Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program (LCP) and its implementing ordinances, and submit the LCP to the California Coastal Commission for its review and certification.
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Santa Monica Mountains Coastal Zone (Third Supervisorial District).
<b>STAFF CONTACT:</b>	Ms. Gina M. Natoli, AICP, at (213) 974-6422.
<b>REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (RPC) HEARING DATES:</b>	October 26, 2006, November 6, 2006, and January 24, 2007. The RPC approved the LCP on March 7, 2007.
<b>RPC RECOMMENDATIONS TO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hold a public hearing to consider the proposed Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program</li><li>• Signify its intent to adopt Plan Amendment repealing the 1986 Malibu Land Use Plan and adopting the Santa Monica Mountains Coastal Zone Plan and its Land Use Policy Map.</li><li>• Signify its intent to adopt an ordinance containing the proposed modifications to Title 21 (Subdivision) and Title 22 (Zoning) of the County Code.</li><li>• Signify its intent to adopt zone changes necessary to ensure consistency with the Land Use Policy Map.</li><li>• Submit the Santa Monica Mountains LCP to the Coastal Commission for its review and certification.</li></ul>
<b>MEMBERS VOTING AYE:</b>	Valadez, Bellamy, Helsley, Rew, and Modugno
<b>MEMBERS VOTING NAY:</b>	None.
<b>MEMBERS NOT VOTING:</b>	None.
<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION:</b>	The Coastal Act requires coastal jurisdictions to manage the conservation and development of coastal resources through a local coastal program. Currently, the County does not have an LCP for the Santa Monica Mountains. As a result, applicants need to obtain coastal development permits from the Coastal Commission. When the proposed LCP is certified by the Coastal Commission, the County

will have the authority to issue coastal development permits in the Santa Monica Mountains.

The Coastal Zone Plan contains goals and policies to guide development in the Santa Monica Mountains Coastal Zone. It sets forth the land use for each parcel in the Land Use Policy Map, and describes the types of development consistent with each land use category. The Plan also identifies coastal resources that must be protected and depicts these on maps. These maps include:

- Sensitive Environmental Resource Areas (SERA). SERA include environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHA), Significant Woodlands and Savannas, Significant Watersheds, and Watersheds.
- Scenic Resources. Scenic Resources include Significant Ridgelines, Scenic Routes, and Scenic Elements.
- Recreation. Recreation elements include public trails and open space/parkland.

The ordinance changes that are a part of this LCP include:

- Establishing a community standards district.
- Creating a new zone, the Rural-Coastal (R-C) Zone, which replaces the current A-1 and A-2 Agricultural Zones. The LCP creates the new R-C Zone to allow for residential development and other uses that are consistent with the goals of preserving the rural character of the Coastal Zone, while minimizing the impacts of future development on coastal resources. Re-designation of parcels to the R-C Zone would allow for most existing uses to continue and allow some additional uses including backyard boarding of horses, bed-and-breakfast establishments, and rural inns.
- Creating three types of coastal development permits with differing levels of review in order to more appropriately address the impacts of individual developments.
- Miscellaneous changes to fully implement the Coastal Zone Plan and integrate the provisions with Title 21 and Title 22.

A zoning consistency program will be carried out in conjunction with the LCP in order to ensure that the zoning is consistent with the Land Use Policy Map.

## **KEY ISSUES:**

Four Sensitive Environmental Resource Areas (SERA) are identified in the Coastal Zone Plan. These SERA are:

- Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA)
- Significant Woodlands and Savannas
- Significant Watersheds
- Watersheds

Within the Santa Monica Mountains, ESHA are primarily riparian and wetland habitats, and closed-canopy oak woodlands. These habitats and vegetation types are relatively rare in the Mountains, and play an important role in the ecosystem of the Coastal Zone. ESHA designations remain virtually the same as the 1986 LUP and are still afforded the highest level of protection within Sensitive Environmental Resource Areas.

The Coastal Commission disagrees with the County's tiered approach to resource protection and contends that all undeveloped land in the Santa Monica Mountains Coastal Zone consisting of locally-indigenous vegetation should be designated as ESHA.

Significant Ridgelines, shown on the Scenic Resources map, are designated based on their proximity to scenic routes and trails, their role in maintaining the quality of neighborhoods, and their contribution to the overall unique character of the Coastal Zone. During the RPC hearing, a number of speakers disagreed with: 1) the designation of Significant Ridgelines on their properties and 2) the methodology used in deciding whether a ridgeline is significant.

The Recreation map shows proposed and existing trail alignments of the Los Angeles County Master Trail Plan. The LCP explains that the depicted alignments are not intended to be precise, and that any requirements to dedicate or improve a trail would be based on establishing a nexus between the proposed development and impacts to trails, and that the extent of any such requirements would

be proportional to the impacts of the proposed development. Further, final trail alignments would be determined in negotiation with the property owner when development is proposed on a parcel that contains a mapped trail segment. Some property owners have expressed the opinion that placing a trail alignment on their property constitutes a taking.

**MAJOR POINTS FOR:**

The LCP:

- Enables the County to gain local control over land use and zoning matters in the Coastal Zone because when the LCP is certified by the Coastal Commission, the County will have the authority to issue coastal development permits.
- Establishes specific policies and standards to protect public health and safety as well as coastal resources.
- Provides simplicity, efficiency, consistency, and certainty to applicants in the coastal development permitting process.
- Maintains a tiered approach to protect sensitive environmental resources, rather than designating much of the Coastal Zone as ESHA.
- Allows for appropriate equestrian uses and preserves the historic and cultural heritage of horses in the Santa Monica Mountains.
- Allows for appropriate visitor-serving commercial-recreation uses, including bed-and-breakfast establishments and rural inns.

**MAJOR POINTS AGAINST:**

The LCP:

- Designates ridgelines as Significant Ridgelines which are not significant, and uses a flawed methodology to designate Significant Ridgelines.
- Violates or removes property rights and reduces property values through downzoning and trail alignments.